



HOWARD COUNTY TOURISM NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Eco-Tourism Wildlife Viewing Brochure is a Winner!

***Howard County Wildlife Viewing Brochure* wins Maryland Governor's Tourism Industry Conference Award for Best Printed Promotional Material**

(Ellicott City, MD) The Maryland Tourism Council hosts the must-attend annual Governor's Tourism Industry Conference: the premier statewide conference/tradeshow, co-sponsored by the Maryland Office of Tourism. This conference offers outstanding guest speakers, education workshops and prestigious industry awards. This year, Howard County Tourism, nominated for many of its marketing efforts, won the coveted state-wide industry award for Best Printed Promotional Material for its popular eco-friendly *Howard County Wildlife Viewing Brochure*. Making its debut in January 2008 with nearly all 10,000 copies distributed, the *Howard County Wildlife Viewing Brochure* is already in the hands of visitors and residents.

"It is a great honor for Howard County Tourism to have received this award. It is even more of an honor to have worked with the many partnering organizations who made the project possible all who shared the same goal of marketing the county's eco-tourism attractions and amenities." said Amanda Hof, Tourism's Special Events & Projects Manager

BACKGROUND

Howard County, home of Maryland's 1st state park, thousands of acres of award-winning parks, open space, rivers, lakes, ponds and farms is ideal for family friendly eco-tourism experiences. Howard County Tourism, Inc. in partnership with Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks and *The Business Monthly* developed the Howard County Wildlife Driving Tour. Data for seventeen tour stops was compiled collaboratively from eco-tourism attractions and organizations: Columbia Association, The Howard County Bird Club, The Howard County Conservancy, Howard County Department of Recreation and Park's Natural Resources Division, Frogwatch USA, The Maryland Department of Natural Resources : Patapsco Valley State Park and the Washington Suburban Sanitation Commission.

The Wildlife tour was developed to offer a county- wide, eco-tourism experience to the out-of-town visitor and Howard County residents alike through highlighting area wildlife and enhancing natural habitat awareness throughout the four seasons. First becoming available in January 2008, the all NEW Howard County Wildlife Driving Tour has received a tremendous response and is becoming immensely popular both locally and regionally. More than 3,000 readers of Audubon magazine have directly requested copies of the Howard County Wildlife Driving Tour

There are only limited quantities of this enormously popular free guide through the Visitor's Information Center in Historic Ellicott City, Howard County's Department Recreation and Parks Headquarters' in Columbia, Howard County Libraries and various other locations that are featured on the tour itself. A diverse audience will find that the tour can be driven in a day, a couple of days, or split up over several months. GTV produced a magazine style television program about the tour for viewing on Tourism's website VisitHowardCounty.com, local cable and at the retailer L.L. Bean at The Mall in Columbia

Wildlife seekers looking for ways to decrease their footprint on the environment will be happy to know that nearly all of the tour's stops are accessible by alternative modes of transportation. Almost all stops can be reach by foot or bicycle through the county's pathway system and Centennial Park, Savage Park, The Savage Mill Trail and Lake Elkhorn are reachable by public transportation, via Howard Transit. To request a pathway map, contact Howard County Tourism, team@visithowardcounty.com . For information on Howard Transit, visit www.howardtransit.com.

GET WILD!

Would you like to get WILD? Howard County Tourism is actively seeking sponsors of the 2nd printing of this hugely successful guide (10,000), contact our office today to learn more 410-313-1900. Special thanks to *The Business Monthly* for donating its design and publications expertise.

TOURISM...Having FUN is Serious Business!

Howard County Tourism, Inc., a non-profit, membership-based organization and is recognized by Howard County Government and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development as the official Destination Marketing Organization for Howard County, Maryland. Howard County Tourism's mission is to increase, develop and promote tourism in Howard County by featuring the county's unique sites, services, products and people like creating the *Howard County Wildlife Driving Tour*. For more information contact Howard County Tourism or check out our website www.VisitHowardCounty.com.

Below are the most recent and available statistics from the Maryland Office of Tourism Development for HOWARD COUNTY'S dynamic Tourism Industry:

- **Tourism generated \$528.72 million in expenditures from domestic visitors in 2006.**
- **The tourism industry generated over 5,000 direct jobs in 2006**
- **Tourism generated \$16.1 million in County tax receipts in 2006.**